

Change Summary

The April draft refines the October 2025 circulation version by expanding the explanatory purpose of home-based economic activities, clarifying the distinction between home-based businesses and home-based industries, adding measurable thresholds to reinforce the intent of the use being “secondary”, tightening compatibility and mitigation requirements, strengthening alignment with provincial guidance on industrial classifications, and providing clearer relationships with OFDU policies. These refinements directly reflect stakeholder feedback requesting greater clarity, predictability, and implementation tools for decision-making in both settlement and agricultural contexts.

Changes include:

- Expanded policy intent describing the economic and community-building role of home-based businesses and home-based industries, including support for local entrepreneurship, economic resilience, and early-stage business incubation.
- Clearer differentiation between home-based businesses and home-based industries, with the former positioned within a residential context and the latter within rural/agricultural environments.
- Quantitative scale limits added to define the meaning of a “secondary use” across different property contexts, including separate expectations for small settlement lots, larger rural residential properties, and active farm operations.
- More prescriptive direction on outdoor activities, including size thresholds, screening, and clustering requirements, to better manage compatibility with neighbouring properties.
- Reference to the Provincial D-6 Land Use Compatibility Guidelines to establish a structured framework for understanding the potential impacts of different classes of industrial activities.
- Introduction of registration and/or licensing mechanisms for improved monitoring, compliance, and transparency.
- Clarified relationship with On-Farm Diversified Uses (OFDUs), establishing that OFDU policies take precedence where a use qualifies under provincial agricultural policy.

BY-LAW NUMBER ###-26

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THE CORPORATION OF THE COUNTY OF BRANT

A by-law to adopt an amendment to the Official Plan of the County of Brant regarding home-based industry and home-based businesses.
Official Plan Amendment (OPA3-B-25)

WHEREAS in accordance with the provisions of Sections 17 and 22 of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13, as amended, ("*The Planning Act*"), municipalities must adopt an official plan and consider requests to amend the official plan;

AND WHEREAS Ontario Regulation 525/97 under the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13, as amended, exempts amendments to the official plan, made after January 1st, 2016, from approval of the Minister, therefore providing the authority to the County of Brant to amend the official plan;

AND WHEREAS the amendment to *A Simply Grand Plan, 2023* is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the County of Brant, in accordance with the *Planning Act*, hereby enacts the following:

1. **THAT** the text attached hereto as Schedule 'A' of this By-Law are hereby approved as Amendment OPA3-B-25 to *A Simply Grand Plan, 2023*
2. **THAT** this By-law shall come into force on the final passing thereof by the Council of the Corporation of Brant subject to compliance with the provisions of *The Planning Act*,

READ a first and second time, this 14th day of April, 2026.

READ a third time and finally passed in Council, this 14th day of April, 2026.

THE CORPORATION OF THE COUNTY OF BRANT

David Bailey, Mayor

Spencer Pluck, Deputy Clerk

By-Law #-26 – Schedule ‘A’

Amendment OPA3-B-25

To the Official Plan for the County of Brant
(*A Simply Grand Plan, 2023*)

Part ‘A’ – The Preamble

This document, approved in accordance with the *Planning Act*, shall be known as Amendment OPA3-B-25 to *A Simply Grand Plan, 2023*.

Purpose:

The purpose of this amendment is to provide specific policies for Home-Based Industries and Home-Based Business uses within *A Simply Grand Plan*.

Basis:

Part 5, Section 7 of *A Simply Grand Plan (2023)* includes economic development and employment area policies for the County. This amendment is for the inclusion of two new subsections within this section for Home-Based Industries and Home-Based Businesses. These amended policies provide for the appropriate uses and conditional permissions of these uses within the County, including criteria and qualifications, and their interaction with other policies.

An amendment is necessary to allow these specific policies, to continue supporting home-based industries and home-based businesses across the County and their growth, while ensuring they are compatible with surrounding land uses, and the County’s character.

Part 'B' – The Amendment

Introduction:

All of this part of the document entitled “Part ‘B’ – The Amendment”, consisting of the following text, constitutes amendment no. 3B to a *Simply Grand Plan, 2023*. Upon approval of this By-law by the Council of the County of Brant, the following modifications are hereby made to *A Simply Grand Plan, 2023*.

Text Changes:

1. Part 8 – Section 15

In Part 8 of the Official Plan, Section 15 is amended to include the following definition:

Outdoor Storage – The keeping, placing, stockpiling, or parking of goods, materials, equipment, machinery, commodities, vehicles or similar items, outside of a completely enclosed building. This definition applies regardless of whether such items are held for sale, lease, processing, staging, distribution, or similar activities, and regardless of whether they are temporary or long-term in duration. The definition does not include storage of items customarily accessory to a residential dwelling and is not intended to conflict with any regulation of property standards enabled by By-law under the Building Code Act.

2. Part 5 – Section 7.7 and Section 7.8

In Part 5 of the Official Plan, the heading immediately preceding Policy 7.6.14, are hereby amended to include two new sections, 7.7 and 7.8, inclusive of the following text:

Inserted:

7.6 Home-Based Businesses

The County of Brant supports the integration of home-based businesses as an ancillary use within areas designated primarily for residential uses, both urban and rural in nature. These policies intend to foster local entrepreneurship, enhancing economic resilience, and enabling flexible employment opportunities. These businesses contribute to a vibrant local economy by allowing residents to pursue innovative and small-scale economic ventures from their homes, as a secondary use, while maintaining the residential character of neighbourhoods. Home-based businesses are an important part of the local economy and thrive when a balance is found that supports business incubation in a manner that respects the integrity of residential communities.

Appropriate Uses, Conditional Permissions and Qualifications

- 7.6.1 The home-based business shall be a secondary use, occupying a limited portion of the property, and subordinate to a lawful residential use in an urban or rural area.
- 7.6.2 The residential appearance and character of the property shall be preserved, with minimal exterior alterations and discreet signage, where permitted.
- 7.6.3 Home-based business permissions are intended to provide flexibility for small-scale businesses where the focus is on sales, services, and activities that do not generate industrial-type impacts.
- 7.6.4 Limited processing, small-scale fabrication, or assembly may be permitted as part of a home-based business, provided that:
- a) The activity occurs entirely indoors.
 - b) The activity does not generate noise, odour, vibration, or dust that cannot be contained wholly indoors.
 - c) The activity does use industrial-grade equipment.
 - d) The scale of the activity does not constitute a home-based industry.
- 7.6.5 Where a home-based business is proposed on a property with a farming operation, the policies for On-Farm Diversified Uses within this Plan shall apply and take precedence.
- 7.6.6 To ensure the use remains ancillary, the following criteria will be considered in establishing land use permissions:
- a) The total area of the home-based business shall be limited and will not exceed 30% of the gross floor area of the principal dwelling.
 - b) Use of accessory or detached structures, including the retrofitting of existing structures or construction of new structures, may be supported for a home-based business provided they are:
 - i. Lawfully established.
 - ii. Comply with applicable setbacks and size restrictions.
 - iii. Located outside of any hazards.
 - c) Outdoors activities, including outdoor storage, shall be limited so that it:
 - i. Does not general negative impacts on surrounding uses, including noise, traffic, odour, and other nuisances as may be applicable.

- ii. Is generally situated in a side or rear yard.
- iii. Is only supported where the size of the property provides for adequate screening and distance from neighbouring properties. Adequate screening will be required in the form of landscaping, fencing, or buildings.
- iv. Is limited in area.

7.6.7 Where a home-based business demonstrates sustained growth beyond the scope of these policies, the County will encourage its relocation to a suitable commercial or employment area. The County may support this transition through economic development programs, site selection assistance, conditional land use permissions, or other appropriate measures.

7.6.8 The County may require home-based businesses to register or obtain a license as a condition of approval. This process will support data collection, policy monitoring, the delivery of economic development services, and compliance with applicable land use standards.

7.7 Home-Based Industries

The County of Brant supports the establishment of home-based industries as an ancillary use in rural areas, where larger properties and the rural context can accommodate small-scale industrial, fabrication, or production activities that are not appropriate within residential neighbourhoods. These policies are intended to foster rural entrepreneurship and enable residents to undertake manufacturing-oriented or industrial-type economic activities from their homes, in a manner that complements rural land use patterns and makes efficient use of existing property and infrastructure. Limitations are put in place to ensure land use compatibility and prioritization of agricultural practices in rural areas.

Home-based industries contribute to a resilient rural economy by providing opportunities for business incubation and incremental growth, while maintaining the rural character of the landscape and ensuring that industrial-type impacts remain appropriately managed. Home-based industries are an important component of the County's economic ecosystem, thriving when supported in locations that provide the space, separation, and rural context needed for these activities to operate compatibly as a secondary use.

Appropriate Uses, Conditional Permissions and Qualifications

- 7.7.1 The home-based industry shall be a secondary use, occupying a limited portion of the property and subordinate to a lawful residential use in a rural area.
- 7.7.2 The rural appearance and character of the property shall be preserved, with minimal exterior alterations and discreet signage, where permitted.
- 7.7.3 Home-based industries shall generally be limited to uses consistent with Class I and II Industrial activities under the D-6 Guidelines.
- 7.7.4 Proposals for Class I and Class II uses may be considered where it can be demonstrated that the use will not generate adverse effects on surrounding land uses and where appropriate mitigation measures (e.g., setbacks, screening, hours of operation) are implemented. Class III industrial uses shall not be permitted as home-based industries.
- 7.7.5 Where a home-based industry is proposed on a property with a farming operation, the use shall be considered an On-Farm Diversified Uses and subject to the applicable policies.
- 7.7.6 To ensure a home-based industry remains ancillary and compatible, the following criteria shall apply:

- a) The lot area of the property shall be a size that ensures adequate spatial separation from neighbouring properties.
- b) All buildings used as part of the home-based industry shall be clustered and located no further than 50 metres from the principal residence on the property.
- c) The total area used for the home-based industry shall be ancillary relative to the size of the principal dwelling and the residential use of the parcel, and in no case shall the total area exceed 500m².
- d) Where the use involves employees, parking shall be provided for a home-based industry in addition to the parking requirements for the residential use.
- e) Uses that generate significant traffic, require municipal servicing, expanded or new road infrastructure, a Permit to Take Water (PTTW), Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) for sewage works, or involve any other large-scale servicing capacity, infrastructure investment, or provincial approval shall not be considered a home-based industry.
- f) The use must be supported by existing rural services, including safe access from a public road and private on-site water and sewage systems with servicing demands limited to those of a typical dwelling.
- g) The use shall be limited to avoid noise, odour, dust, vibration, or traffic that would be incompatible with surrounding rural or agricultural uses, which may require demonstration through a study and requirements applied as conditions of development.
- h) The minimum required setback for a home-based industry, including all associated structures and activities, will be conditional on the classification of the use, requiring a minimum setback of 20 metres for any Class I use, and a 70 metres setback for any Class II use. The setbacks shall be taken from the use to the nearest property lines.
- i) Use of accessory or detached structures may be permitted for a home-based industry provided they are:
 - i. Lawfully established,
 - ii. In compliance with applicable setbacks and size restrictions,
 - iii. Located outside of any hazards,
 - iv. Not a building types, construction standards, or professional classification associated with major commercial or industrial uses.

Farm buildings may be considered appropriate within the agricultural system.

- j) Indoor storage is preferred for any home-based industry. Outdoor storage will only be supported where it has been demonstrated:
 - i. That the size of the property provides for adequate screening and distance from neighbouring properties;
 - ii. The outdoor area is limited to 25% of the total floor area of the use;
 - iii. It is located in a side or rear yard; and
 - iv. It will be adequately screened in the form of landscaping, fencing, or buildings, consistent with the residential or agricultural character of the area.
- 7.7.7 To implement this policy framework and ensure the objectives are maintained, the County of Brant will track the establishment of home industries, which may be done through such measures as registration, licensing, development agreements, or similar implementation methods.
- 7.7.8 The County may require greater setbacks, buffers, or screening for higher impact uses, such as welding, machine repair, fabrication, or outdoor uses, or where site-specific conditions warrant additional separation to mitigate potential impacts related to noise, odour, vibration, or traffic.
- 7.7.9 Where a home-based industry demonstrates significant growth that exceeds the scale or intensity supported by these policies, the County shall encourage relocation to an appropriately zoned industrial or commercial area. The County may support this transition through economic development programs, site selection assistance, conditional land use permissions, or other appropriate measures.

Part “C” – Implementation

Upon approval of this amendment by the Council of the Corporation of the County of Brant, the Official Plan for the County of Brant, A Simply Grand Plan, 2023, will be amended in accordance with this amendment.

This amendment has been prepared based on the Office Consolidation dated October 2024.

Implementation and interpretation of this amendment shall be in accordance with the policies of the Plan. This amendment supplements the intent and policies of the Official Plan, and additional interpretative guidance may also be found by reading the applicable County of Brant Planning Reports.

To support consistent implementation of this Plan, the County may interpret policies to clarify wording or consolidate related provisions where ambiguity or unintended overlap is identified during implementation. Any such interpretation shall maintain the original intent and policy outcomes of the Plan and shall not introduce new permissions, restrict existing permissions, or otherwise materially alter the policy framework. Clarifications arising from interpretation may be documented through guidelines, staff bulletins, or additional implementation materials.

Transition

Any application will be subject to the policies applicable on the date of decision.